

## BEFORE THE TRIP

- **Send trip preparation materials:** Tibet is a unique travel destination and requires some special considerations. It is highly recommended that you provide your clients with detailed information before they arrive.
- **Be clear on service terms and conditions:** This is MOST important. Make sure the itinerary, what's included and what's not and your company's terms and conditions are explained clearly to your customers.
- **Caution clients about foreseeable circumstances:** Always explain to your clients that Tibet is an adventurous place and the itinerary may change based on weather, road conditions or illness. Always have a good back-up plan in place.



- **Meet with your staff:** Cooks, drivers and guides to discuss the trip and make a list of all essential things that you will need. A standard pre-trip meeting can prevent any oversights and will improve everyone's travel experience.

## DURING THE TRIP

- **Brief your customers on the day's itinerary** in advance and provide any relevant reading materials. Make sure your clients are well informed and know what is going on at all times.
- **Think through and make a list of things you need for each day.** Always be prepared for each day and plan ahead to make sure your clients experience is always positive
- **Check in with your clients at the end of each day.** For many customers, this is a once in a lifetime trip to Tibet. You must ask them how they are feeling and what you can do to make their trip even better.
- **Environment:** Many tourists do not know how to care for the environment. All guides must set a good example and show their customers how to deal with garbage, protect flora and fauna and interpret the ecosystem of the destination.
- **Culture is one of the main elements that attract tourists** and a tour guide's job is to provide an authentic Tibetan cultural experience and create appreciation and motivation to help protect and preserve Tibetan culture.

## AFTER THE TRIP

- **Seek feedback:** If you have checked in with customers in each day, you should already have a good idea of how their trip went. However, it is a good idea to ask for customer's feedback before they leave. Using a written form is a good idea.
- **Build a customer contact list:** If you don't have some kind of a database already, create and maintain a list of customers that you have served in the past and also people that you have met who may become your customers or help you to spread the word about your company.
- **Maintain good relationships:** Networking and maintaining a good relationship with customers, staff, suppliers and hotels, etc. is the most important part of any business. Remember that you represent your company at all times you are out on a trip.

# GUIDE RESPONSIBLY

## WHAT NOT TO DO

- **Avoid tourist shopping:** Most foreign tourists do not like tourist shopping. They want to be free to choose shopping locations on their own. You need to put customer's interests first and think about the consequences of such business practices on local communities and culture.
- **Do not leave guests unattended or puzzled:** Unless customers tell you that they need a one or two hour nap, or wish to explore on their own, you should never leave them alone during the trip. You are paid to serve them, that is your job!
- **Never steal, lie or abuse anyone, especially clients:** Tibetans are known to have one of the most caring and compassionate cultures in the world. If you intentionally lie, steal or abuse people; it will affect everyone: customers, yourself, and your business and it will cause negative impacts on Tibetan people and culture in general.



## WHAT TO DO

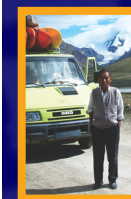
- **Communicate effectively:** Failing to communicate well often leads to misunderstanding and problems for guides and customers. Communicating effectively means making sure that both parties (you and them) understand each other clearly. Be patient and take the time to listen carefully and explain yourself clearly.
- **Be a good ambassador for Tibet:** As a tour service provider, you will have the most contact with your customers for the duration of the trip and you are a big part of their experience. What you say, how you behave and the service you provide will reflect not only on you but also on Tibet, its culture and people.
- **Support interests of local communities:** Employ local guides, horsemen or monks when ever possible. Pay them fair wages and share the opportunities around to avoid any conflicts.
- **Obey rules and regulations:** Make sure that tourists don't travel to areas without proper permits, stay in unregistered accommodation or do anything illegal.

*This Responsible Tourism Initiative was created by Tibet Village Project and Chris Jones for the Tibet Ecotourism Project: an ongoing educational initiative through Columbia University, NYC.*

## GUIDELINES FOR RESPONSIBLE TOUR GUIDES



Tibet is a unique and special travel destination that needs your help. Ancient cultures and traditions, fragile mountain environments, rare and endangered flora and fauna are worth protecting for generations to come. As a guide in Tibet you can make a difference and ensure that tourism has a positive impact on the places you go and the people you meet.



Guiding tour groups is a valuable skill to learn. It is not always easy and can be a challenging job. Are you ready for the challenge?

**HOW TO RUN  
AN ORGANISED AND  
SUCCESSFUL TRIP**